

SHORT COMMUNICATION

***Vigna* sp. central (M.E. Trudgen 1626) (Fabaceae: Phaseoleae) is not distinct from *V.* sp. Hamersley Clay (A.A. Mitchell PRP 113)**

Vigna lanceolata Benth. *s. lat.* is a morphologically variable Australian endemic taxon widely distributed throughout the tropics and subtropics in a diversity of habitats (Lawn & Holland 2003); the complex is presently under taxonomic investigation by Ailsa Holland (Queensland Herbarium; BRI) as part of a PhD research project. Preliminary studies of this complex identified a number of morphotypes Australia-wide (Lawn & Watkinson 2002; Lawn & Holland 2003), with a Table of names and attributes in Lawn and Holland (2003: 298) underpinning the erection in 2004 of three phrase names on the Western Australian plant census, *viz.* *V.* sp. central (M.E. Trudgen 1626) [‘Central Australia type’], *V.* sp. northern pubescent (A.A. Mitchell 3667) [‘Northern pubescent form’] and *V.* sp. silver leaf (T.E.H. Aplin 6300) [‘Silver leaflet type’]. Of these, *V.* sp. silver leaf is no longer considered to be distinct from *V. lanceolata* in Western Australia (A. Holland pers. comm., 17/11/2009) and has been removed from the census.

Vigna sp. central was distinguished from other forms based on its trailing, non-twining stems, short stem hairs, and broadly ovate leaflets which do not display any ontogenetic change in shape (Lawn & Holland 2003). At the time of its erection *V.* sp. central was considered to be endemic to, and uncommon in, the Pilbara and was conservation-listed as Priority Two under (then) Department of Conservation and Land Management Conservation Codes for Western Australian Flora.

In 2007 the phrase name *V.* sp. Hamersley Clay (A.A. Mitchell PRP 113) was erected on the census to account for a number of ‘Pilbara Ranges Project’ voucher specimens collected between 1994 and 1996 which were assigned the tag-name ‘*V.* sp. Pilbara Black Soil’. Under the information supplied for establishment of the new phrase name, *V.* sp. Hamersley Clay was only superficially discriminated from *V.* sp. central, which was regarded as having ‘smaller ovate leaves which are shallowly lobed proximally’.

As additional *Vigna* Savi specimens from across the Pilbara have been collected during flora surveys associated with development applications the distinctness of *V.* sp. central and *V.* sp. Hamersley Clay has been queried, and it has been proposed on numerous occasions that they are the same taxon. We have critically re-examined the specimens at PERTH identified as *V.* sp. central and *V.* sp. Hamersley Clay, including voucher specimens for these names, and conclude that these entities are the same as each other. This combined entity is also probably the same as *V.* sp. McDonald Downs Station (R.A. Perry 3416) (A. Holland pers. comm., 6/11/2015), a central Australian taxon phrase-named at BRI.

In response to these findings, and pending the conclusion of her research and the formal description of *V.* sp. McDonald Downs Station (including informal synonymy) by A. Holland, the name *V.* sp. central (M.E. Trudgen 1626) has been removed from the Western Australian plant census and specimens incorporated under *V.* sp. Hamersley Clay (A.A. Mitchell PRP 113). This taxon is widespread across the Pilbara bioregion, extending into the northern Carnarvon bioregion, and does not warrant a conservation status.

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References

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